

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 /094 W
-----028297 060657Z /21

R 060625Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8303
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION USNATO
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT
USNMR SHAPE BE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 VALLETTA 02039

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, MT, LY
SUBJECT: QADHAFI'S VISIT: MINTOFF ON MALTA'S FUTURE

1. SUMMARY: MINTOFF ADDRESSED A MALTA LABOR PARTY (MLP) RALLY JULY 2 WHICH WAS ALSO ATTENDED BY COL. QADHAFI. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, MINTOFF REPEATED HIS OFT STATED REJECTION OF ANY "ATTACHMENT" WITH EITHER THE US OR THE USSR AND, STRESSING THAT HIS POLICY OF NEUTRALITY WAS IN THE INTERESTS OF BOTH THE ARABS AND THE EUROPEANS, DEMANDED ONCE AGAIN THAT NEIGHBORING EUROPEAN AND ARAB COUNTRIES HELP MALTA ECONOMICALLY AND "IN CASE OF ATTACK". MINTOFF ANNOUNCED THAT HE HAD WRITTEN TO PRESIDENT CARTER ABOUT HIS PLANS FOR MALTA AND THAT THE PRESIDENT REPLIED THAT THE USG "IS HAPPY WITH MALTA'S ENDEAVOR TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY AND WITHOUT
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MILITARY BASES". ALTHOUGH THE LIBYANS AND THE ALGERIANS HAVE AGREED TO HELP MALTA, THE EUROPEANS ARE STILL "BICKERING" AMONG THEMSELVES; MINTOFF SAID HE HAD WARNED THEM ONCE AGAIN THAT "TIME IS RUNNING OUT". MINTOFF STATED THAT QADHAFI HAD COME TO MALTA TO IRON OUT "DIFFERENCES" IN A "BROTHERLY" MANNER, TO BE REASSURED THAT MALTA DOES NOT WANT ANY MILITARY BASES AND TO "HEAR

ME (MINTOFF) SAY" THAT IF AN AGREEMENT WITH THE EUROPEANS IS NOT REACHED MALTA WILL BE WILLING TO MAKE ONE WITH THE ARABS ONLY. END SUMMARY.

2. PRIME MINISTER MINTOFF, SPEAKING AT A MALTA LABOR PARTY RALLY ON JULY 2 AT WHICH COL. QADHAFI ALSO SPOKE (SEE SEPTTEL), DISCUSSED MALTA'S FUTURE AFTER MARCH, 1979. HE REEMPHASIZED HIS GOVERNMENT'S PLEDGE TO RID MALTA OF ALL MILITARY BASES, SAYING THAT "WHATEVER HAPPENS" THERE WOULD NOT BE ANY MILITARY BASE IN MALTA POST MARCH 31, 1979. MALTA DOES NOT WANT "ANY ATTACHMENT" WITH EITHER THE US OR THE SOVIET UNION; CONSEQUENTLY, MINTOFF STATED, MALTA EXPECTS HELP FROM NEIGHBORING EUROPEANS AND ARAB COUNTRIES TO ENSURE MALTESE SECURITY AND TO ASSIST ECONOMICALLY. CLAIMING THAT MALTA'S POLICY IS ADVANTAGEOUS TO BOTH EUROPEANS AND ARABS, MINTOFF ASSERTED THAT BOTH MUST "SHOULDER THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN INDEPENDENT MALTA IF THEY WANT TO BE TOLD WHAT ARE MALTA'S INTENTIONS".

3. AFTER SAYING THAT THE MALTESE KNOW WHERE THEY STAND WITH "OUR FRIENDS, THE LIBYANS AND ALGERIANS" MINTOFF COMPLAINED THAT THE GOM DOES NOT KNOW WHERE IT STANDS WITH THE EUROPEANS WHO ARE "BICKERING AMONG THEMSELVES AS TO WHO WILL PAY". AS THE EUROPEANS USED TO SAY THAT THEY DID NOT KNOW THE VIEWS OF THE UNITED STATES ON THIS MATTER, MINTOFF SAID HE WROTE TO PRESIDENT CARTER EXPLAIN-
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ING HIS POSITION. THE PRESIDENT REPLIED THAT THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT IS "HAPPY WITH MALTA'S ENDEAVOR TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY AND WITHOUT MILITARY BASES" AND THE US GOVERNMENT IS ENCOURAGING OTHER COUNTRIES TO HELP. NEVERTHELESS, THE EUROPEANS ARE STILL ARGUING WHO WAS GOING TO GIVE "THE LITTLE ASSISTANCE WE ARE ASKING FOR" EVEN THOUGH THEY HAVE BEEN WARNED THAT "TIME IS RUNNING OUT".

4. MINTOFF THEN TURNED TO THE REASONS FOR QADHAFI'S VISIT, SAYING THAT QADHAFI HAD COME TO HEAR HIM (MINTOFF) SAY THAT MALTA DOES NOT WANT TO HAVE ANY MILITARY BASES AND THAT IF THE EUROPEANS DO NOT WANT TO REACH AN AGREEMENT, MALTA WOULD BE WILLING TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH THE ARABS ONLY.

5. MINTOFF, ALLUDING TO WIDELY-KNOWN DIFFICULTIES IN HIS RELATIONS WITH LIBYA, TOLD THE CROWD NOT TO WORRY TOO MUCH BECAUSE "WE SOMETIMES HAVE A QUARREL WITH OUR ARAB FRIENDS" AS THESE DIFFICULTIES CAN BE IRONED OUT AMONG FRIENDS AND CAN BE SETTLED IN A "BROTHERLY MANNER".

6. COMMENT: MINTOFF'S REFERENCE TO HIS EXCHANGE OF CORRESPONDENCE WITH PRESIDENT CARTER WAS GIVEN FRONT PAGE

HEADLINES IN THE MALTA NEWS, THE MLP PAPER. WHILE HIS
RENDITION OF US ATTITUDES TOWARDS MINTOFF'S NEUTRALITY
PROPOSALS GOES SOMEWHAT BEYOND WHAT IS SAID IN PRESIDENT
CARTER'S LETTER, WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT IS A SERIOUS DIS-
TORTION. MINTOFF DID NOT MENTION HIS REQUEST FOR A CON-
CESSIONAL LOAN.

7. THUS FAR, WE HAVE RECEIVED NO QUERIES FROM THE PRESS
CONCERNING THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO MINTOFF. SHOULD WE
GET ANY (WHICH WE DO NOT NOW EXPECT), WE PLAN TO STICK
CLOSELY TO THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE LETTER, WITH

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 VALLETTA 02039

PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON US ROLE THROUGH PRIVATE US INVEST-
MENT, AND AVOID ANY MENTION OF MINTOFF'S REQUEST FOR A
CONCESSIONAL LOAN AND OUR REJECTION THEREOF.

8. OUR COMMENTS ON MINTOFF'S SPEECH FOLLOW
SEPTEL. LAINGEN

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 06 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
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